

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Previously presented): An image capturing method in which an image of a subject is captured by an image capturing device using image capturing optics and an image capturing signal from said image capturing device is subjected to specified processing schemes including a color separating process, thereby producing an image signal, said method comprising the steps of:

determining whether sensitivity of said image capturing device is insufficient or not during image capturing;

when the sensitivity of said image capturing device is insufficient, relatively increasing both an overlapping region of spectral sensitivity of said image capturing device and intensity of said color separating process, when the sensitivity of said image capturing device is sufficient, relatively decreasing at least one of the overlapping region of the spectral sensitivity of said image capturing device and the intensity of said color separating process, and

wherein, when relatively increasing or decreasing the intensity of said color separating process, an occurrence of noise generation is not thereby increased during color separation.

2. (Original): The image capturing method according to claim 1, wherein the overlapping region of the spectral sensitivity of said image capturing device is an infrared region.

3. (Original): The image capturing method according to claim 1, wherein said color separating process is an Under Color Removal scheme.

4. (Previously presented): An image capturing apparatus comprising:
- an image capturing device that captures an image of a subject using image capturing optics;
 - a device for producing an image signal by performing specified processing schemes including a color separation process on an image capturing signal from said image capturing device;
 - a device which determines whether sensitivity of said image capturing device is insufficient or not during image capturing;
 - a device which, when the sensitivity of said image capturing device is insufficient, relatively increases an overlapping region of spectral sensitivity of said image capturing device and a device which, when the sensitivity of said image capturing device is insufficient, relatively increases intensity of said color separating process; and
 - at least one of a device which, when the sensitivity of said image capturing device is sufficient, relatively decreases the overlapping region of the spectral sensitivity of said image capturing device and a device which, when the sensitivity of said image capturing device is sufficient, relatively decreases the intensity of said color separating process,
- wherein, when the intensity of said color separating process is relatively increased or decreased, an occurrence of noise generation is not thereby increased during color separation.
5. (Original): The image capturing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the overlapping region of the spectral sensitivity of said image capturing device is an infrared region.
6. (Original): The image capturing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said color separating process is an Under Color Removal scheme.

7. (Previously presented): The image capturing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein after the image capturing device captures the image of a subject the image is converted to exposure data and the exposure data is subjected to color separation.

8. (Previously presented): An image capturing method according to claim 1, wherein when the sensitivity of said image capturing device is sufficient, relatively decreasing both the overlapping region of spectral sensitivity of said image capturing device and the intensity of said color separating process.

9. (Previously presented): The image capturing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein when the sensitivity of said image capturing device is sufficient, relatively decreasing both the overlapping region of spectral sensitivity of said image capturing device and the intensity of said color separating process.

10. (Previously presented): The image capturing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said device for producing the image signal by performing specified processing schemes does not generate noise.

11. (Previously presented): The image capturing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said image capturing apparatus comprises a device for maintaining a consistent aperture.

12. (Previously presented): The image capturing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said image capturing apparatus comprises a device for maintaining a consistent shutter speed.

13. (Previously presented): The image capturing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said sensitivity is based on a spectral response of said image capturing device.

14. (New): The image capturing method according to claim 1, wherein the process of increasing the intensity itself does not increase the occurrence of noise.

15. (New): The image capturing method according to claim 1, wherein amplification is not required to increase the intensity of said color separating process.

16. (New): The image capturing method according to claim 1, further comprising capturing a still image.

17. (New): The image capturing method according to claim 1, further comprising:
converting the image capturing signal into exposure data; and
adjusting the coefficients of the exposure data to perform said color separating process.

18. (New). The method of claim 1, wherein the color separating process is a masking process.